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PONDEROSA FIRE ADVISORY COUNCIL

**A Partnership of Emergency Service Organizations
in the Greater Flagstaff Area**



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Jan 28th, 2004

Mark Spitzer, Chair
Arizona Corporation Commission
1200 West Washington
Phoenix AZ 85007-2996

AZ CORP COMMISSION
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Environmental Portfolio Standard
Docket No. RE-00000C-00-0377

SUBJECT: Biomass Energy

The Ponderosa Fire Advisory Council (PFAC), a multi-party consortium of fire response agencies centered in the greater Flagstaff area, has long-recognized the unhealthy state of our forests and the desperate need to take corrective action. Our forests – and our homes, neighborhoods, communities, and our very lives – are threatened by an on-going drought, a growing insect infestation, and the very real threat of catastrophic wildfire.

In addition to a variety of community interests currently at-risk from these environmental factors is the genuine threat to firefighter safety. Wildfires are becoming larger and more intense, fueled to a large degree by the overabundance of naturally-occurring flammable fuel now found throughout our forested areas.

As such, we have a vested interest in the establishment of a viable biomass-energy industry within the State of Arizona. We feel such an industry can play a significant role in reducing the alarming fuel-load within our forests, improve long-term forest health, and increase firefighter safety.

Therefore, we urge the Arizona Corporation Commission to act now to:

1. Require a portion of Arizona's renewable energy be produced by biomass (wood and wood waste products) energy,
2. Adopt a permanent and indefinite extension of the Arizona Environmental Portfolio Standard (EPS) beyond the current sunset date of 2012, and
3. Develop rules and regulations necessary to advance the framework for a biomass energy industry in the State of Arizona.

If PFAC can assist in this effort in any way, please let me know.

Sincerely,

Don Howard
Chair, PFAC
(928) 526-9537

Arizona Corporation Commission

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